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SUPPORT BY THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM OF THE EFFORTS OF GOVERNMENTS TO PROMOTE AND CONSOLIDATE NEW OR RESTORED DEMOCRACIES

MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 6 June 1997 from the Permanent Representatives of the Russian Federation and the Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit the texts of the Treaty between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership (annex I), a Russian-Ukrainian declaration (annex II) and a joint statement by the Russian Federation and Ukraine (annex III), signed on 31 May 1997 in Kiev by the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris N. Yeltsin, and the President of Ukraine, Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma.

We should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 38 and 81 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) S. LAVROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations

(Signed) A. ZLENKO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of Ukraine to the
United Nations

* A/52/50.

ANNEX I

Treaty between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership, signed in Kiev on 31 May 1997

The Russian Federation and Ukraine, hereinafter referred to as the "High Contracting Parties",

Guided by the historically close ties and relations of friendship and cooperation between the peoples of Russia and Ukraine,

Noting that the Treaty between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic of 19 November 1990 has contributed to the development of good-neighbourly relations between the two States,

Reaffirming their obligations under the provisions of the Agreement between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on the further development of inter-State relations, signed at Dagomys on 23 June 1992,

Considering that the strengthening of friendly relations, good-neighbourliness and mutually advantageous cooperation is in keeping with the basic interests of their peoples and serves the cause of peace and international security,

Desiring to improve the quality of these relations and strengthen their legal basis,

Determined to ensure the irreversibility and further progress of the democratic processes taking place in the two States,

Having regard to the agreements concluded within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States,

Reaffirming their commitment to the norms of international law, first and foremost the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and complying with their obligations as members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

The High Contracting Parties, as friendly, equal and sovereign States, shall base their relations on mutual respect and confidence, strategic partnership and cooperation.

Article 2

The High Contracting Parties, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and their obligations under the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, shall respect each other's territorial integrity and confirm the inviolability of their common borders.

Article 3

The High Contracting Parties shall base their relations with each other on the principles of mutual respect, sovereign equality, territorial integrity, the inviolability of borders, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the non-use of force or threat of force, including economic and other means of pressure, the right of peoples to control their own destiny, non-interference in internal affairs, observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, cooperation among States, and conscientious fulfilment of international obligations and other universally recognized norms of international law.

Article 4

The High Contracting Parties believe that good-neighbourliness and cooperation between them are important factors in improving stability and security in Europe and the whole world. They shall engage in close cooperation with a view to strengthening international peace and security. They shall take the necessary measures to promote general disarmament, the creation and consolidation of a system of collective security in Europe, and the strengthening of the peacekeeping role of the United Nations and the improvement of the effectiveness of regional security mechanisms.

The Parties shall endeavour to ensure that all controversial issues are settled exclusively by peaceful means and shall cooperate in preventing and settling conflicts and situations that affect their interests.

Article 5

The High Contracting Parties shall hold regular consultations with a view to further deepening their bilateral relations and exchanging views on multilateral problems of mutual interest. When necessary, they shall coordinate their positions in order to carry out concerted action.

To this end, regular summit meetings shall be held by agreement between the Parties. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Parties shall meet at least twice a year.

Working meetings between representatives of other ministries and departments of the Parties shall be held as necessary to discuss questions of mutual interest.

The Parties may establish, on a permanent or temporary basis, joint commissions with a view to solving individual problems in diverse areas.

Article 6

Each High Contracting Party shall refrain from participating in, or supporting, any actions directed against the other High Contracting Party, and shall not conclude any treaties with third countries against the other Party. Neither Party shall allow its territory to be used to the detriment of the security of the other Party.

Article 7

If a situation arises which, in the opinion of one of the High Contracting Parties, poses a threat to peace, violates the peace or affects the interests of its national security, sovereignty or territorial integrity, it may propose to the other High Contracting Party that consultations on the subject be held without delay. The States shall exchange relevant information and, if necessary, carry out coordinated or joint measures with a view to overcoming the situation.

Article 8

The High Contracting Parties shall develop their relations in the field of military and military-technical cooperation and State security, as well as cooperation on border questions, and customs, export and immigration control, on the basis of separate agreements.

Article 9

The High Contracting Parties, affirming their determination to reduce their armed forces and weapons, shall promote the disarmament process and cooperate in the strict implementation of agreements on the reduction of armed forces and weapons, including nuclear weapons.

Article 10

Each High Contracting Party shall guarantee nationals of the other Party rights and freedoms on the same basis and to the same extent as their own citizens, except as established by the national legislation of the Parties or their international treaties.

Each Party shall protect, according to established procedure, the rights of their nationals residing in the territory of the other Party, in accordance with their obligations under instruments of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and with other universally recognized principles and norms

of international law, and agreements concluded within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States, to which they are parties.

Article 11

The High Contracting Parties shall, in their territory, take the necessary measures, including the adoption of appropriate legislative acts, to prevent and suppress any activities that constitute an incitement to violence or violence against individuals or groups of citizens, based on national, racial, ethnic or religious intolerance.

Article 12

The High Contracting Parties shall protect the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of ethnic minorities in their territory and shall create conditions that encourage such diversity.

Each High Contracting Party shall guarantee the right of persons belonging to ethnic minorities, individually or together with other persons belonging to ethnic minorities, freely to express, preserve and develop their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious diversity and promote and develop their culture without being subjected to any attempts to assimilate them against their will.

The High Contracting Parties shall guarantee the right of persons belonging to ethnic minorities to exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms fully and effectively and enjoy them without any discrimination whatsoever and in full equality before the law.

The High Contracting Parties shall promote equal opportunities and conditions for the study of the Russian language in Ukraine and of the Ukrainian language in the Russian Federation, and for the training of teachers to provide instruction in these languages in educational institutions and, to this end, shall provide the same degree of State support.

The High Contracting Parties shall conclude cooperation agreements on these questions.

Article 13

The High Contracting Parties shall develop equal and mutually advantageous economic cooperation and shall refrain from any actions that might cause economic damage to the other Party. To this end, recognizing the need for the gradual formation and development of a common economic area through the creation of conditions for the free movement of goods, services, capital and labour, the Parties shall take effective measures to coordinate a strategy for carrying out economic reforms, deepening economic integration on the basis of mutual advantage and harmonizing their economic legislation.

The High Contracting Parties shall ensure the broad exchange of economic information and ensure that enterprises, entrepreneurs and scholars of the two Parties have access to such information.

The Parties shall endeavour to coordinate their financial, monetary and credit, budget, currency, investment, price, taxation, trade and economic and customs policies and to create equal opportunities and guarantees for economic agents; they shall promote the formation and development of direct economic and trade relations at all levels, specialization and cooperation among technologically related industries, enterprises, associations, corporations, banks, producers and consumers.

The High Contracting Parties shall promote the maintenance and development, on the basis of mutual advantage, of cooperation in the fields of production and science and technology among industrial enterprises in the development and production of modern, scientifically advanced production, including production for defence purposes.

Article 14

The High Contacting Parties shall ensure favourable conditions for direct trade and other economic relations and cooperation at the level of administrative and territorial units in accordance with national legislation currently in force, devoting special attention to the development of economic ties between border regions.

Article 15

The High Contracting Parties shall ensure favourable economic, financial and legal conditions for the entrepreneurial and other economic activities of enterprises and organizations of the other Party, including the encouragement and reciprocal protection of their investments. The Parties shall encourage diverse forms of cooperation and direct ties between economic agents of the two States, irrespective of the forms of ownership.

Article 16

The High Contracting Parties shall cooperate in the United Nations and other international organizations, including economic and financial organizations, and shall support each other in gaining admission to international organizations and acceding to agreements and conventions to which one of the Parties is not a party.

Article 17

The High Contracting Parties shall expand cooperation in the field of transport and guarantee the freedom of transit of persons, goods and means of transport through each other's territory in accordance with the universally recognized norms of international law.

The carriage of goods and passengers by rail, air, sea, river and road between the two Parties and transit through their territory, including through sea, river and airports and by rail and road networks and also lines of communication, main pipeline and electrical networks situated in the territory of the other Party, shall be effected in accordance with the procedure and conditions specified in separate agreements.

Article 18

The High Contracting Parties shall cooperate in search and rescue activities, and in the investigation of transport accidents.

Article 19

The High Contracting Parties shall ensure the observance of a legal regime of State property and of property of juridical persons and nationals of one High Contracting Party, situated in the territory of the other High Contracting Party, in accordance with the legislation of that Party, unless otherwise agreed between the Parties.

The Parties take it that questions of property relations that affect their interests shall be settled on the basis of separate agreements.

Article 20

The High Contracting Parties shall devote special attention to the development of cooperation with a view to ensuring the operation of national fuel and energy industries, transport systems and communications and data-processing systems, promoting the maintenance, rational use and development of industries and individual systems in these fields.

Article 21

The High Contracting Parties shall, on the basis of separate agreements, cooperate in the exploration and use of outer space, and the joint production and development of space-flight technology, observing the principles of equality and mutual advantage and in accordance with international law. The High Contracting Parties shall promote the maintenance and development of ties of cooperation among enterprises of the space-flight industry.

Article 22

The High Contracting Parties shall assist each other in the elimination of accidents resulting from emergency situations in communications lines, main pipelines, energy systems, transport networks and other facilities of mutual interest to the two Parties.

The procedure for cooperation in emergency repairs and restoration work shall be specified in separate agreements.

Article 23

The High Contracting Parties shall cooperate in the fields of education, science and technology and in the development of research activities, encouraging direct ties between their research organizations and the implementation of joint programmes and projects, particularly in the area of advanced technologies. Questions relating to the use of the results of joint research, obtained in the course of cooperation, shall be dealt with on a case-by-case basis through the conclusion of separate agreements.

The Parties shall cooperate in the training of personnel and shall encourage the exchange of specialists, scholars, graduates, trainees and students. They shall reciprocally recognize the equivalence of diplomas, higher degrees and scholarly titles, and shall conclude a separate agreement on this question.

The Parties shall exchange scientific and technical information and shall cooperate in the protection of copyright and related rights, and other forms of intellectual property in accordance with the national legislation and the international obligations of their countries in this field.

Article 24

The High Contracting Parties shall develop cooperation in the fields of culture, literature, art, the media, tourism and sport.

The Parties shall cooperate in the preservation, restoration and use of their historical and cultural heritage.

The Parties shall in every way promote the strengthening and expansion of creative exchanges and interaction among groups, organizations and associations of persons in their countries who are active in the fields of literature and art, cinematography, book publishing and archives; the observance of traditional days of their national cultures; the holding of artistic festivals and exhibitions; guest performances of ensembles and soloists; the exchange of delegations of prominent cultural figures and specialists at the State, regional and local levels; and the establishment of national cultural centres in the territory of their States.

The Parties shall provide State support in the elaboration and conduct of joint programmes for the revitalization and development of the tourist industry, the exploration of new potential recreational areas, the preservation, restoration and effective use of cultural and historical and religious monuments and buildings. They shall in every way encourage the strengthening of contacts between sports organizations and clubs, and the joint conduct of inter-State sporting events.

The Parties shall jointly develop and implement mutually advantageous programmes for developing a material and technical base for television and radio, including satellite broadcasting, and shall organize, on a parity basis, television and radio broadcasts in Ukrainian in the Russian Federation and in Russian in Ukraine.

The Parties shall promote contacts between people, political parties and social movements, trade unions, religious organizations and associations, and health, sports, tourist and other associations and unions.

The whole range of questions covered in this article shall be dealt with in separate agreements.

Article 25

The High Contracting Parties shall cooperate in the protection and improvement of the environment, the prevention of transboundary pollution, the rational and resource-conserving utilization of the natural environment, the elimination of the consequences of natural and technogenic emergencies and shall promote coordinated action in this area at the regional and global levels with a view to creating a comprehensive system of international environmental safety.

The Parties take it that questions relating to environmental protection and environmental safety, including the protection and use of the ecosystems and resources of the Dnieper river and other transboundary watercourses, and action in response to environmental emergencies, shall be dealt with in separate agreements.

Article 26

The High Contracting Parties shall cooperate in the elimination of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant and shall conclude a separate agreement on this question.

Article 27

The High Contracting Parties shall develop cooperation in the field of social protection, including the social security of their citizens. They shall conclude separate agreements with a view to solving questions of labour relations, job placement, social protection, compensation for losses involving physical injury or other impairment of health resulting from industrial accidents, the social security of citizens of one Party who are employed or who are working as trainees in the territory of the other Party, and on other questions in this field that require coordinated solutions.

The Parties shall ensure the unimpeded and timely transfer of pensions, allowances, alimony, monetary compensation for losses involving physical injury or other impairment of health, and other socially significant payments to

citizens of one Party residing permanently or temporarily in the territory of the other Party.

Article 28

The High Contracting Parties shall cooperate in the restoration of the rights of deported peoples in accordance with bilateral and multilateral agreements concluded within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Article 29

The High Contracting Parties, as Black Sea States, are prepared to continue to develop all-round cooperation in order to save and preserve the natural environment of the Azov-Black Sea basin, conducting marine and climatological research, utilizing the recreational potential and natural resources of the Black Sea and Sea of Azov, developing navigation and operating sea routes, ports and installations.

Article 30

The High Contracting Parties recognize the importance for the Russian Federation and Ukraine of maintaining a technologically unified system for the collection, processing, dissemination and use of hydrometeorological information and data on the state of the environment in order to safeguard the interests of the population and the national economy, and shall contribute in every way possible to the development of cooperation in the field of hydrometeorology and environmental monitoring.

Article 31

The High Contracting Parties shall devote special attention to the development of mutually advantageous cooperation in the field of health protection and the improvement of the sanitary and epidemiological situation, the production of medicines and medical equipment, and the training of highly qualified personnel for the medical facilities of the Parties.

Article 32

The High Contracting Parties shall cooperate in solving questions relating to the regulation of migration processes, including measures to prevent and prohibit illegal migration from third countries, for which they shall conclude a separate agreement.

Article 33

The High Contracting Parties shall cooperate in combating crime, especially organized crime, terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including criminal acts directed against the safety of maritime navigation, civil aviation and other forms of transport, illegal trafficking in radioactive materials, weapons, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and contraband, including the illegal transfer across the border of objects of cultural, historical or artistic value.

Article 34

The High Contracting Parties shall cooperate in the legal sphere on the basis of separate agreements.

Article 35

The High Contracting Parties shall promote the development of contacts and cooperation between the parliaments and parliamentarians of the two States.

Article 36

This Treaty shall not affect the rights and obligations of the High Contracting Parties arising from other international treaties to which they are parties.

Article 37

Disputes regarding the interpretation or application of the provisions of this Treaty shall be settled through consultations and negotiations between the High Contracting Parties.

Article 38

The High Contracting Parties shall conclude with one another other agreements necessary for the implementation of the provisions of this Treaty, as well as agreements in fields of mutual interest.

Article 39

This Treaty is subject to ratification and shall enter into force on the date of the exchange of the instruments of ratification.

On the day this Treaty enters into force, the Treaty between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic of 19 November 1990 shall cease to have effect.

Article 40

This Treaty is concluded for a period of 10 years. It shall subsequently be extended automatically for further 10-year periods unless one of the High Contracting Parties notifies the other High Contracting Party in writing of its desire to terminate it at least six months before the expiry of the current 10-year period.

Article 41

This Treaty shall be registered with the Secretariat of the United Nations in accordance with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

DONE at Kiev on 31 May 1997 in duplicate in the Russian and Ukrainian languages, both texts being equally authentic.

For the Russian Federation:

(Signed) B. YELTSIN

For Ukraine:

(Signed) L. KUCHMA

ANNEX II

Russian-Ukrainian declaration signed in Kiev on 31 May 1997

In the course of a State visit to Ukraine on 30 and 31 May 1997, the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris N. Yeltsin, and the President of Ukraine, Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma, held a detailed discussion of the state of, and prospects for developing, Russian-Ukrainian cooperation in diverse areas, as well as a broad range of international issues. The negotiations between the Presidents took place in an atmosphere of cordiality, goodwill and mutual respect.

1. The Presidents stressed that relations between the Russian Federation and Ukraine are based on the principles of equality, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the two States and are conducted in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the basic instruments of international law, the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent instruments of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

They noted the major role that the Russian-Ukrainian Treaty of 19 November 1990 and the Agreement between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on the further development of their inter-State relations of 23 June 1992 played in the development of new relations between the two countries, while preserving the centuries-old traditions of friendship, kinship and spiritual affinity between the Russian and Ukrainian peoples.

Experience convincingly shows that good-neighbourliness and mutually advantageous cooperation between the Russian Federation and Ukraine is in keeping with their basic national interests and are an important factor in strengthening global and regional stability.

The Russian Federation welcomed Ukraine's acquisition of non-nuclear status and reaffirmed its commitment to the Trilateral Statement by the Presidents of the Russian Federation, the United States of America and Ukraine of 14 January 1994 and the Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, signed in Budapest on 5 December 1994.

The Treaty between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership, signed in Kiev on 31 May 1997, begins a new era in Russian-Ukrainian relations and constitutes a solid basis for the further development of mutually advantageous cooperation.

The heads of State welcome the completion of negotiations to settle the question of the Black Sea fleet. The agreements that have been signed create conditions for the normal operation of the Russian Black Sea fleet and its lease of the main base in Sevastopol for 20 years. The agreements will help strengthen security and stability in the region.

The Presidents agree that the peoples of the Russian Federation and Ukraine shall continue to live and work in peace and harmony, supporting each other at a crucial stage in their history, when they are carrying out, in their independent sovereign States, large-scale reforms with a view to establishing a democratic society and a State based on rule of law, with a socially oriented market economy.

2. In their consideration of international issues, the Presidents noted that historical changes are currently taking place in the world arena, which mark the transition of mankind from global bloc confrontation to a multipolar world in which the diversity of political, economic and cultural development is becoming firmly established. These transformations have become possible, first of all, as a result of the rejection of confrontational thought and politics.

The heads of the two States emphasized the need to strengthen the United Nations as the mainstay of the global system of international security, and they expressed their support for further improving the effectiveness of the Organization by adapting it to the new challenges of the modern world.

The Russian Federation and Ukraine are in favour of creating a model of general and comprehensive security for Europe in the twenty-first century, in which the interests of all countries would be taken into account. In this regard, they attach great importance to the decision of the Lisbon Summit of OSCE on developing a Charter on European Security. They expressed the conviction that OSCE has a special role to play in building a secure, stable, united and free community of States from Vancouver to Vladivostok. The further strengthening of OSCE is in keeping with the interests of the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The Presidents consider that the instruments on relations between the Russian Federation and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and between the Ukraine and NATO safeguard the national interests of their countries and contribute to the strengthening of security and stability in European and Atlantic region.

Mr. Boris N. Yeltsin and Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma noted the importance of the admission of the Russian Federation and Ukraine into the Council of Europe in order to consolidate high standards in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Presidents reaffirmed the desire of their States for the further progressive development of relations with the European Union in the context of all-European economic integration.

The heads of State are in favour of the comprehensive development of political, economic and humanitarian relations among the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and of improving the effectiveness of the Commonwealth's activities.

3. The Presidents devoted priority attention to the dynamic development of bilateral relations, the political basis for which is the Treaty between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership. A

solid legal and contractual basis is being established for Russian-Ukrainian interaction in the political, economic, scientific and technological and humanitarian fields. Contacts between bodies of the legislative and executive authorities of the Russian Federation and Ukraine are expanding. In the field of trade and economy, in spite of a number of difficulties, the volume of mutual trade in 1996 amounted to $17.8 billion. Military and technical cooperation is being developed.

Measures are being taken to ensure conditions for unimpeded communication between nationals of the Russian Federation and Ukraine, who every year make more than 20 million trips between the two countries.

The Presidents reached agreement on the main tasks for further developing and deepening Russian-Ukrainian ties, and stated that the paramount task was to ensure the practical implementation of the provisions of the new general political Treaty signed during the visit.

The Presidents agreed to conclude a treaty on the Russian-Ukrainian State border, including its delimitation, and agreed to step up negotiations on these questions. The Russian Federation and Ukraine will continue their concerted efforts to counteract criminal elements, contraband and illegal migration.

Mr. Boris Yeltsin and Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma expressed their support for the continued growth of mutual trade, the harmonization of economic relations, the creation of the necessary conditions for establishing mutually advantageous cooperation between economic agents, the settlement of existing disputes in the area of mutual trade, and the speedy removal of artificial trade barriers. The Presidents reaffirmed the importance of observing a regime of free trade between the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The placing of economic ties on a long-term, stable basis is a matter of urgency. The planned improvement of the mechanism of trade and economic relations must provide for the creation of the necessary conditions for developing market-based cooperation, broader access of Russian and Ukrainian capital to each other's markets, the development of joint investment projects, the formation of transnational financial and industrial groups and the creation of intergovernmental special-purpose programmes.

The ensuring of guaranteed and stable deliveries of sources of energy and the mutually acceptable solution of questions relating to the transit of goods through each other's territory on the basis of appropriate agreements are of strategic importance to the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The Presidents consider it necessary to deepen industrial and scientific and technical cooperation in fields of priority interest to the Russian Federation and Ukraine: the exploration of outer space, the aircraft industry, atomic energy, the fuel and energy sector, electronics, metallurgy and the production of agricultural equipment. The implementation of such joint projects as Morskoy start ("Sea Start") and the production of AN-70 aircraft and new agricultural machinery will help maintain and develop existing potential, create new jobs and provide access to the markets of third countries.

The national academies of sciences should play an important role in the deepening of scientific cooperation.

The Presidents stressed the need for unconditional respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the preservation and development, in accordance with universally recognized norms, of the ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious diversity of all peoples living in the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

Guided by the interests of tens of millions of people living in the Russian Federation and Ukraine who are linked by diverse ties, including ties of kinship, the States shall promote contacts among people and public bodies, encourage cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture and the media and promote the study of the Russian language in Ukraine and the Ukrainian language in the Russian Federation.

An agreement was reached on the opening of information and cultural centres of the Russian Federation in Kiev and of Ukraine in Moscow.

The Presidents expressed their support for cooperation between border areas and between regions in all spheres.

Mr. Boris N. Yeltsin and Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma consider the strengthening of relations between the Russian Federation and Ukraine a matter of paramount importance in their activities, and successful cooperation as priorities of the two States and peoples. To this end, they recognized the need to continue an active political dialogue, including dialogue at the highest level, improve the effectiveness of the Russian-Ukrainian Joint Commission on Cooperation and promote the development of businesslike relations between economic agents and entrepreneurial circles of the two States.

* * *

The President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris N. Yeltsin, invited the President of Ukraine, Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma, to make a State visit to the Russian Federation. The invitation was gratefully accepted. The date of the visit will be set later.

(Signed) B. YELTSIN
President of the Russian Federation

(Signed) L. KUCHMA
President of Ukraine

ANNEX III

Joint statement by the Russian Federation and Ukraine, signed in Kiev on 31 May 1997

The Presidents of the Russian Federation and Ukraine welcome the recent signing in Kiev of Russian-Ukrainian agreements settling the issue of the Black Sea fleet. A problem that has complicated Russian-Ukrainian cooperation for some years has been solved.

The agreements concluded mark a new chapter in the more than 200-year history of the Hero-City Sevastopol and the Black Sea fleet, and are an important milestone in the fraternal relations between two great peoples - the Russian and Ukrainian peoples - and have paved the way for the signing of a new general political Treaty that lays the foundation for relations of friendship, cooperation and partnership between the Russian Federation and Ukraine. These agreements will help strengthen a spirit of mutual understanding and confidence between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, and will become a major stabilizing factor in the entire system of relations between our States.

The status of the Russian Black Sea fleet, the terms and duration of its presence in hospitable Ukraine have now been clearly defined. The main base of the Russian Black Sea fleet shall be in Sevastopol. In a solemn ceremony, the St. Andrew flag shall be raised on Russian ships, and the flags of the Ukrainian navy on Ukrainian ships. The Russian Black Sea fleet and the Ukrainian navy are gaining broad opportunities for further deepening cooperation between the two States in the naval sphere on the Black Sea, and they will cooperate in safeguarding the southern borders of our two countries.

As we note the significance of the agreements that were reached, we recall the heroic pages of the history of Sevastopol. The legendary defence during the Crimean War made the name of this city a synonym of heroism and patriotism throughout the world. During the Great Patriotic War, the sailors, soldiers and inhabitants of the city covered themselves with unfading glory. Sevastopol was and forever shall remain in our memories a city of military glory, military valour, a symbol of our comradeship in arms and the personification of friendship between the Russian and Ukrainian peoples. The city's sites of military glory and its museums and memorials will continue to be objects of attention and veneration of our compatriots and by people of all generations.

With particular warmth, we today address the war and labour veterans of Sevastopol, whose deeds shall never be forgotten either in the Russian Federation or Ukraine. These people fully deserve a secure and dignified old age. The Governments of the two States shall cooperate to this end, carrying out joint economic, scientific and technical, transport and cultural projects.

We assure the workers of the city, by whose efforts the good name and glorious traditions of the Hero-City are upheld and preserved, that everything will be done to ensure the prosperity of Sevastopol, in the name of friendship and solidarity among people.

In the spirit of the agreements that have been signed - in today's difficult economic circumstances - the necessary measures shall continue to be taken to improve the life of the people of Sevastopol, strengthen its economic potential and solve the social problems of servicemen and members of their families and of all the city's inhabitants.

We sincerely wish all inhabitants of Sevastopol, Russians and Ukrainians, servicemen and civilians, good health, well-being and happiness.

(Signed) B. YELTSIN
President of the Russian Federation

(Signed) L. KUCHMA
President of Ukraine